

Cozzarelli <ncozzare@socrates.Berkeley.EDU> on 10/23/2000 08:15:25 PM

To: mconway@annap.infi.net, Ken Fulton@NAS, Diane
Sullenberger/PNAS/NAS/NationalAcademies@NAS, Audrey Mosley@NAS, John
Malloy/PNAS/NAS/NationalAcademies@NAS, Bruce Alberts@NAS

cc:

Subject:

Friends,

The new Pat Brown and Mike Eisen campaign to boycott journals that do not make their content freely available after 6 months has gained steam, at Berkeley at least. I have corresponded with Pat on it and I will spare you the heated prose. I have just enclosed some of the formal letters. My questions for us are:

1. They mean literally that the information is free to all after 6 months, even for commercial use. Does this violate our current copyright provisions?
2. Both Pat and Mike have written that PNAS meets the standards they propose. If the answer to q.1 is no, then we should ask them to stop doing so and perhaps to issue a correction as many have signed on thinking that PNAS is on board.
3. Do you see any other reasons why PNAS should not participate? E.G. My colleague, Tom Cline, fears that the boycott will drive good publishers out of business to be replaced by non peer reviewed journals. While Pat would no doubt be happy at this outcome, I think it is an over reaction.

I personally would like to join the boycott, but I will not do so if it is in conflict with PNAS or NAS interests. As editor of PNAS my personal views may be construed as PNAS views. Do any of you think that I should not join in?

Nick

The letter:

We support the establishment of an online public library that would

provide the full contents of the published record of research and scholarly discourse in medicine and the life sciences research in a freely accessible, fully searchable, interlinked form. Establishment of this public library would vastly increase the accessibility and utility of the scientific literature, enhance scientific productivity, and catalyze integration of the disparate communities of knowledge and ideas in biomedical sciences.

We recognize that the publishers of our scientific journals have a legitimate right to a fair financial return for their role in scientific communication. We believe, however, that the permanent, archival record of scientific research and ideas should neither be owned nor controlled by publishers, but should belong to the public, and should be freely available through an international online public library.

To encourage the publishers of our journals to support this endeavor, we pledge that, beginning in September, 2001, we will publish in, edit or review for, and personally subscribe to, only those scholarly and scientific journals that have agreed to grant unrestricted free distribution rights to any and all original research reports that they have published, through PubMed Central and similar online public resources, within 6 months of their initial publication date.

Signed:

Between 10-5-2000 and 10-16-2000, the following scientists (in alphabetical order) have signed this letter:

Robert (Buzz) Baldwin, Professor, Dept. of Biochemistry, Stanford
Greg Barsh, Associate Professor, Dept. of Pediatrics, Stanford
David Botstein, Professor, Dept of Genetics, Stanford
Patrick O. Brown, Associate professor, Dept. of Biochemistry, Stanford
Joseph DeRisi, Assistant Professor, University of California, San Francisco
Michael Eisen, Assistant Professor, University of California, Berkeley
Pehr Harbury, Assistant professor, Dept. of Biochemistry, Stanford
Dan Herschlag, Associate professor, Dept. of Biochemistry, Stanford
Dale Kaiser, Professor, Dept. of Biochemistry, Stanford
Arthur Kornberg, Professor, Dept. of Biochemistry, Stanford
David Lipman, Director, National Center for Biotechnology Information
Roel Nusse, Professor, Dept. of Developmental Biology, Stanford
Suzanne Pfeffer, Professor, Dept. of Biochemistry, Stanford
Michael Rexach, Assistant professor, Dept. of Biology, Stanford
James Spudich, Professor, Dept. of Biochemistry, Stanford
Matthew Scott, Professor, Dept. of Developmental Biology, Stanford
Julie Theriot, Assistant professor, Dept. of Biochemistry, Stanford
Ron Vale, Professor, University of California, San Francisco
Harold E. Varmus, President, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center

Note: We recognize that some scientists may agree in principle with this pledge, but have practical concerns about limiting their options for publishing their research, depending on the extent of support that this pledge receives from their scientific peers. Signatures on this letter are provisional until May 1, 2001, when we intend to publish this open letter. Until that time, your signature represents an agreement in principle, and can be withdrawn. We would be grateful if you would still be willing to have your support

made public, as your leadership by example will encourage others to give similar support. If you would like your support to remain strictly confidential until your commitment is definite, we will honor that request. [None of the individuals listed above have asked that their signatures be kept confidential].

Best regards,

Pat
Patrick O. Brown
Department of Biochemistry
& Howard Hughes Medical Institute
Stanford University School of Medicine
Stanford, CA 94305-5428